

**SUMMARY OF THE
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 27, 1998**

The Proficiency Testing Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Tuesday, October 27, 1998, at 1 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). The meeting was led by its chair, Ms. Anne Rhyne of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The principal purpose of the meeting was to discuss the list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and the development of a process for coordinating the adoption of standards between the NELAC Proficiency Testing Committee and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).*

INTRODUCTION

The committee members in attendance indicated that they had received the comment packages sent by Ms. Rhyne and they approved the minutes for the teleconference call on October 13, 1998.

MEETING IN NORFOLK, VA (NOVEMBER 9-10, 1998)

Development of the Radiochemistry and Environmental Toxicology appendices is ongoing and the subcommittees will continue to hold teleconferences to prepare these sections. Drafts will be presented to the committee at the meeting in Norfolk on November 9-10. Since Ms. Lara Autry will be unable to attend the meeting, discussion of the appendix on Air Samples will be held at a later time.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

On October 23, 1998, Ms. Rhyne had distributed a list of five FAQs and responses related to proficiency testing (PT) that were developed by Ms. Barbara Burmeister and Mr. Chuck Wibby. The committee was asked to discuss any outstanding issues related to these FAQs before they are submitted to the Membership and Outreach Committee for posting on the NELAC Website.

One of the FAQs was whether water pollution (WP) PT samples can be used to satisfy the PT requirements of the Discharge Monitoring Report Quality Assurance (DMRQA) Study Program. The response to this FAQ has not yet been determined. After some discussion, the committee members agreed that they needed to put their questions in written form and submit them to the appropriate individual at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Ms. Rhyne will email Mr. John Helm, of the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA), who is co-lead of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) DMRQA.

One other issue still under discussion is the frequency of PT studies. Historically, a number of States required two PT studies each year. So that participating States would not have to lower their standards, the NELAC Standards also require two PT studies per year. The committee

agreed to add this topic to the agenda for further discussion at the committee's meeting on November 9-10, 1998.

After further discussion on these issues, the FAQs list will be submitted to Ms. Irene Ronning, Chair of the Membership and Outreach Committee. Ms. Rhyne will contact Ms. Ronning to check on the deadline for the FAQs.

EPA/NIST/EMMC ITEMS

The PT Committee had been asked by Ms. Wendy Blake-Coleman to develop a process for coordinating the adoption of standards between the PT Chapter and the Office of Water (OW). The purpose of this would be to ensure consistency where possible and to provide input as appropriate. By inviting representatives of EPA to attend the PT Committee's conference calls, this task is partially accomplished. On the other hand, the PT Committee needs a mechanism which enables them to identify and review EPA regulations as draft proposals. It was suggested that the committee be added to a formal list of reviewers for EPA-proposed regulations, if such a list exists. Since Ms. Blake-Coleman was unable to attend this conference call, Mr. Bob Graves offered to discuss this item with her.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for November 9-10, 1998 in Norfolk, VA.

**ACTION ITEMS
PROFICIENCY TESTING COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 27, 1998**

Item No.	Action Item	Date To Be Completed
1.	Ms. Rhyne will email Mr. John Helm with questions regarding DMRQA.	

PARTICIPANTS
Proficiency Testing Committee Meeting
October 27, 1998

Name	Affiliation	Address
Ms. Anne Rhyne, Chair	TX Natural Resrc. Conserv. Comm.	T: 512-239-1291 F: 512-239-2550 E: arhyne@tnrcc.state.tx.us
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Ms. Barbara Burmeister	Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene	T: 608-833-1770, ext. 107 F: 608-833-1019 E: burmie@mail.slh.wisc.edu
Mr. Matt Caruso	NY State Dept. of Health	T: 518-485-5570 F: 518-485-5568 E: caruso@wadsworth.org
Mr. Tom Coyner (absent)	Analytical Products Group	T: 614-423-4200 F: 614-423-5588 E: apg@citynet.net
Ms. Betsy Dutrow (liaison) (absent)	U.S. EPA, Office of Research and Development	T: 202-564 - 9061 F: 202-565 - 2441 E: dutrow.elizabeth@epamail.epa.gov
Mr. Robert Graves (invited guest)	U.S. EPA, Office of Research and Development	T: 513-569-7197 F: 513-569-7115 E: graves.bob@epamail.epa.gov
Ms. Caroline Madding (invited guest)	U.S. EPA, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water	T: 513-569-7402 F: 513-569-7191 E: madding.caroline@epamail.epa.gov
Ms. Cindy Nettletrou (absent)	American Waterworks	T: 618-239-0516 F: 618-235-6349 E: cnettrou@bellevillelab.com
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